TECH Fund Training Initiative

General Program Description

Indiana is meeting the challenge of the new economy!

The information technology revolution is impacting all sectors of the Indiana economy. To help Indiana citizens and companies adapt to the new economy the Indiana Department of Commerce E-Commerce Division is introducing a pilot grant program called the Technology Enhancement Certification for Hoosiers Fund, or simply the "TECH Fund".

Developed in consultation with the IT industry, the TECH Fund is a reimbursement grant program whose purpose is to help Indiana companies meet the demands of the new information economy by rapidly increasing the number of certified information technology workers in Indiana.

Launched in April 2000, the TECH Fund is funded jointly by the Indiana Department of Commerce and the Indiana Department of Workforce Development at $1,000,000. The first round of funding enabled 39 Indiana businesses to train employees in IT certifications.

In October 2000, a second round of funding at $1,000,000 was released to respond to Indiana businesses demand for access to IT training. This grant fund is established using existing workforce training appropriations of both agencies.

Here's How It Works

The TECH Fund provides financial assistance to existing companies that are committed to training their workers in the latest information technology skills.

The application process:

- Review the eligibility criteria online
- Submit a request for consideration form online or call 317-232-8888
- Work with the Project Managers from the Indiana Department of Commerce to:
  1. Define your information technology training needs
  2. Define your readiness to expand or implement your information technology strategies
  3. Define how this investment can improve your competitive edge
- Receive a two page application and submit the proposal to the TECH Fund review committee Complete final application for funding
- Award notification and contract executed
- Training begins

Grantees will receive reimbursement when a copy of employee certification by an industry certified trainer is submitted to Commerce. Typically, reimbursement for eligible costs will be forwarded to awardees in two weeks.

All certifications must be completed within two years of the date of the grant award. After two years the unspent portions of the grant award will be de-obligated.

Eligible Entities

Indiana companies or non-profit corporations that employ Indiana residents (US Citizens only) in advanced information technology occupations. Non-resident, contractual, or part-time employees are not eligible. Companies must have been in operation for at least one year prior to the application date and are in good standing with the State of Indiana.

Eligible training costs

Training activities eligible for reimbursement under the guidelines are the training offered by industry certified training providers that result in a full-time employee receiving a portable certification in systems administration, systems engineering, software development, professional certifications and other certifications in advanced e-business enabling applications.

Instructor led, computer based training, and self study costs are eligible for reimbursement provided the employee obtains the appropriate vendor certification upon completion of the coursework. The TECH Fund will reimburse the company for certification exams - though only for a single attempt.

Certification training eligible for reimbursement from the TECH Fund are based on the individual needs of the company and approved by an industry IT panel.

Information Technology Training Priorities

Systems Administration
Certified Novell Administrator CNA
Microsoft Certified Database Administrator MCDBA
Microsoft Certified Professional + Site Building MCP+SB
Oracle Database Administrator

Systems Engineering
Certified Lotus Professional Systems Engineer CLP
Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer MCSE
Microsoft Certified System Engineer + Internet MCSE+I
Certified Novell Engineer CNE
Master Certified Novell Engineer MCNE
Certified Directory Engineer (Novell) CDE

Software Developer
Microsoft Certified Solutions Engineer MCSD
Sun Certified Java Programmer
Sun Certified Java Developer
Application Developer R1 (Oracle)

Application Developer R2 (Oracle)
SyBase Power Builder

Professional Certifications
Certified Lotus Professional Applications Developer CLP
Microsoft Certified Professional MCP
Microsoft Certified Professional + Internet MCP+I
Certified Internet Professional (Novell) CIP
People Soft Certified
Oracle Certified
Cisco Certified Network Associate CCNA
Cisco Certified Network Associate Engineer CCNAE
C++

Costs not eligible
   Travel costs
   Equipment costs
   Administrative costs
   Other costs specified by the Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana
Department of Commerce guidelines

Selection Criteria

TECH Fund awards will be based upon the following criteria:

- Identified IT training need

- Prospective grantee's readiness to expand IT strategies

- Compelling case that the IT training investment will improve
  Indiana's competitive edge

- Quality and scope of the IT certification training

- Membership in information technology skills alliance. The
  Indiana Department of Commerce encourages information
  technology companies, or IT divisions within companies, to
  join local or regional information technology trade
  associations or skills alliances. Applications from companies
  that are members of an IT skills alliance will be awarded
  additional points in the review process.

Grant Awards

The maximum grant award for any one company or non-profit corporation is $50,000, or
$2,500 per employee, which ever is less..

Reimbursement Schedule

Funds will be released only when the employee has successfully
completed the training module(s) and received a certification (i.e.
training certificate) from an industry certified trainer.

The TECH Fund is designed to reimburse a company in a timely manner for cost of training that results in a portable certification, whether this training involves single or multiple training modules.

For example, a recipient company may submit an application that contains a 9 day training/certification course for 4 employees. Three weeks later, when the certification is completed and documented, the company may claim reimbursement. At the same time a company may start 4 other employees on a certification process that takes 12 months. In 12 months, when certification is complete and documented, the company may claim reimbursement. Applicants may submit multiple training certifications scenarios in a single application. Eligible applicants may submit only one application for the first round of TECH funding.

The TECH Fund Review Committee

Chair: Director of E-Commerce, Indiana Department of Commerce

Members:
Representatives from business and industry, Indiana's Department of Commerce, Department of Workforce Development, and the Department of Administration.

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